PAGE 01

BUENOS 06707 01 OF 04 161650Z

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 `SSO-00 /026 W

--------047584

O R 161531Z AUG 79

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0000

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

USUN NEW YORK 1013

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

A L SECTION 1 OF 4 BUENOS AIRES 6707

EXDIS

E.O. 12065: XDS-1 8/16/79 (CHAPLIN, MAXWELL) OR-M DECLASSIPKIN FULL

TAGS: SHUM AR

SUBJECT: CLANDESTINE PRISONS

NS6 Declassification Review [EO 13526]

by John Powers on 2/16/2018

REF: STATE 204564; STOCKHOLM 3279

- 1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT.)
- 2. SUMMARY RESPONSE TO REFTEL. FIRST TO ADDRESS THE CONCERN EXPRESSED IN THE STATE REFTEL, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES ARE BEING TAKEN TO PREPARE FOR THE IACHR VISIT. THE REPRESSION IS CONTINUING ALONG RECOGNIZED AND PREVIOUSLY REPORTED LINES, BUT WITH A SHARP REDUCTION IN INTAKE OF VICTIMS. END SUMMARY RESPONSE.

3. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS. ARGENTINA HAS HAD MANY PLACES FOR CLANDESTINE INTERROGATION ---THERE MAY HAVE BEEN HUNDREDS DURING THE THICKEST PART OF THE REPRESSION OF SUBVERSION/TERRORISM. WE HAVE INSUFFICIENT DATA EVEN TO GUESS AT WHO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02

BUENOS 06707 01 OF 04 161650Z

RAN WHICH ONES, HOW THEY WERE STAFFED ETC. WE BELIEVE THAT THE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AND DIFFUSION OF POWER THAT MARKED THE REPRESSION WORKED TO INDUCE EACH UNIT OF THE SECURITY

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

(L) Release () Excise () Deny (U) Declassify Exemptions b () (E.O. 13526 25x ()()() Declassify after _

With concurrence of:

∠obtained

2 of 12

SERVICES TO WANT ITS OWN HOLDING FACILITY. ALTHOUGH THESE NUMBERS WERE REDUCED AND CONSOLIDATIONS WERE MADE AS THE REPRESSION WORE ON.

- 4. WE CANNOT ESTABLISH THAT HOLDING PRISONERS FOR THE SAKE OF HAVING THEM, OR THROUGH RELUCTANCE SUMMARILY TO EXECUTE THEM, EVER PLAYED A ROLE TO CREATE LARGE "HOLDING CENTERS.". PRISONERS PASSED THROUGH INTERROGATION EXPERIENCES THAT VARIED CONSIDERABLY IN LENGTH, THEN "SAVED THEMSELVES" BY COOPERATION WITH SECURITY OFFICIALS (WHICH COULD BE FOLLOWED BY EMERGENCE IN JAIL AND, WHEN AT LAST THEY BEGAN TO BE PUBLISHED. A PEN LIST. TRANSFER TO A "REHABILITATION SITE," FREEDOM OR EXFILTRATION FROM ARGENTINA) OR WERE EXECUTED -- A FATE THAT IT APPEARS ALSO AWAITED PRISONERS "WITH BLOODY HANDS", WHETHER OR NOT THEY COOPERATED. AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS THE POSSIBILITY OF A PERSON'S BEING "SURFACED" APPEAR TO HAVE DECLINED SHARPLY. STORIES OF ANOMALIES ABOUND, BUT THE PATTERN DESCRIBED ABOVE NEVERTHELESS' EMERGES.
- 5. THIS REASONABLY WELL KNOWN, WELL DOCUMENTED PROCESS, COMBINED WITH VERY SHARP REDUCTIONS IN "INTAKE" DURING 1978 AND 1979 LEAD TO THE RESUMPTION THAT FEW CLANDESTINE PRISONERS SHOULD REMAIN IN FAR FEWER CENTERS THAN ONCE EXISTED. THE RAZING OR ABANDONMENT OF SEVERAL CENTERS IS KNOWN. CLOAURES HAVE BEEN REPORTED BY A VARIETY OF CONFIDENTIAL.

CONPIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUENOS 06707 01 OF 04 161650Z

SOURCES AND TOP MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT, FOR WHAT THIS IS WORTH, HAVE GIVEN ASSURANCES THAT THERE ARE NO CLANDESTINE CENTERS AND PRISONERS.

6. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ORDINARY (I.E. THOSE COVERED BY RECOGNIZED GOVERNMENT DOCTRINE ESTABLISHED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE REPRESSION) CLANDESTINE PROCEDURES WERE SPEEDED UP TO ACCOMODATE "HOUSECLEANING" BEFORE THE VISIT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS -- A PROCESS OF HOUSECLEANING FACILITATED BY THE COMIISION VISIT'S POSTPONEMENT FROM MAY OF 1979 UNTIL SEPTEMBER. WE DOUBT HOWEVER THAT CRITERIA OR PROCEDURES WERE CHANGED WITH THE VISIT IN MIND, EXCEPT IN THE SENSE THAT ABOUT NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER OF LAST YEAR NEW GUIDELINES WERE GIVEN

WHICH VASTLY REDUCED DISAPPEARANCES IN 1979-ALREADY DOWN CONSIDERABLY IN 1978 COMPARED WITH
PREVIOUS YEARS. THIS ACTION, WE BELIEVE, WAS
MOTIVATED NOT BY THE IMMINENCE OF THE COMMISSION'S
VISIT BUT BY THE SPIRITY OR EXIGENCIES THAT MOTIVATED
THE GOVERNMENT'S INVITATION TO THE COMMISSION IN
THE FIRST PLACE.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUENOS 06707 02 OF 04 161745Z ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SSO-00 /026 W

-----047945 161808Z /42

O R 161531Z AUG 79
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1954
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 4 BUENOS AIRES 6707

EXDIS

- 7. WHILE WE MAY SPECULATE THAT THEY STILL EXIST (EVEN IF ONLY AS SMALL HOLDING FACILITIES FOR THE MOST RECENTLY DISAPPEARED) WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIFIC CLANDESTINE CENTERS STILL EXISTING. WE HAD ONE REPORT SPECULATING ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH CENTERS AND KILLING POSSIBLE PRISONERS. NO CONFIRMATION OF THIS REPORT COULD BE OBTAINED.
- 8. AS FOR A RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION, OUR CONCERN FOR THE FATE OF PRISONERS WHO MIGHT NOT BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN EXPRESSED TO THE GOA REPEATEDLY (SEE BELOW) AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. IF WE WERE TO MAKE MORE FORCEFUL REPRESENTATIONS, THERE IS A REAL RISK THAT WE WOULD ELICIT A DEMAND FOR HARD

CONFIDENTIAL

EVIDENCE OF CLANDESTINE PRISONERS, WHICH OUR INFORMATION BASE COULD NOT SUPPLY. CONSEQUENTLY WE BELIEVE OUR EFFORTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE TO SUPPORT AN EFFECTIVE VISIT OF THE IAHRC. END INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY TO FINDINGS.'

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02

BUENOS 06707 02 OF 04 161745Z

9. BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM. THE EMBASSY OFFICER WHO HAS INTERVIEWED ABOUT 170 RIGHT OF OPTION CANDIDATES, BASING THIS ON WHAT PRISONERS HAVE TOLD HIM, SPECULATES THAT AT ONE TIME EVERY POPULATION CENTER OF ANY SIZE IN ARGENTINA HAD AN INTERROGATION-DETENTION CENTER. THESE CENTERS WERE "CLANDESTINE" IN THE SENSE THAT HOWEVER WELL THEY MIGHT BE KNOWN LOCALLY THEY WERE NOT OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGED. USUALLY THEY WERE MILITARY ESTABLISH-MENTS OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER, OR MILITARY BASES. SOMETIMES THEY BELONGED TO THE POLICE. THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WERE PROCESSED THROUGH THESE. BASED UPON ACTUAL INTERVIEWS WITH PRISONERS WHO CLAIM TO HAVE BEEN TORTURED DURING INTERROGATION (ABOUT 90 PERCENT OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED), CENTERS WERE LOCATED IN THE PLACES LISTED BELOW. NO NOTATIONS OF THE NUMEROUS REPORTS OF INTERROGATIONS AT UNKNOWN PLACES WITHIN CENTRAL

HAD NO IDEA WHERE THEY WERE TAKEN EXCEPT THAT
IT WAS "JUST A FEW MINUTES FROM WHERE I WAS
PICKED UP." THE DATES CITED REFER TO THE PERIOD
OF INTERROGATION OF THE PERSON INTERVIEWED:
A MILITARY BASE NEAR LA PLATA - AUG. 1976
"SOMEWHERE NEAR QUILMES" - ONE PRISONER FOR
7 MONTHS, BEGINNING IN OCTOBER OF 1977;
ANOTHER PRISONER FOR ONE MONTH, JANUARY
1976
"NEAR BERAZATEQUI" FOR 12 DAYS, JANUARY 1976
"A BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS NEAR BANFIELD" - THIS

BUENOS AIRES ARE RECORDED, SINCE PRISONERS ORDINARILY

ACCORDING TO SEVERAL PRISONERS, RELATING TO VARIOUS TIMES (ALSO "DISCOVERED" BY CONFIDENTIAL

CONPIDENTIAL

PAGE 03

BUENOS 06707 02 OF 04 1617452

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS)

- "NEAR MORON, BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE" SEPTEMBER
- "IN SAN MIGUEL" (B.A. PROVINCE) MAY 1976 (FOR 2 MONTHS)
- "LA PERLA" NEAR CORDOBA NOVEMBER 1976 (THIS IS ANOTHER LOCATION THAT IS OFTEN DESCRIBED BY OTHERS)
- "IN BAHIA BLANCA" JANUARY 1977 (FOR FOUR MONTHS)
 CORNER OF PASEO COLON AND SAN JUAN, BUENOS AIRES MAY 1977 (THIS FACILITY HAS ALSO BEEN
 DESCRIBED BY SEVERAL FORMER PRISONERS AND
 ADMITTED TO HAVE EXISTED BY A MEMBER
 OF A SECURITY FORCE. IT HAS DEFINITELY
 BEEN RAZED AS PART OF A HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT.)
- 10. OTHER PEOPLE INTERVIEWED HAVE SPOKEN OF INTERRO-GATION UNDER TORTURE AT RECOGNIZED PRISONS AND POLICE FACILITIES: CATAMERCA PRISON (JUNE 1976), LA PLATA PRISON (SECPTEMBER 1976, AND BY OTHER PRISONER IN 1977); POLICE HEADQUARTERS AT MENDOZA (MARCH 1976), ZARATE (APRIL 1975), MAR DEL PLATA (JULY 1976), RIO CUARTO (APRIL 1976), SALTA (1975), AND SAN MIGUEL DE TUCUMAN (1975).
- 11. MORE RECENT DATA FROM SECONDARY SOURCES. THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY FOR CLEARING OUT PEN PRISONERS BY RELEASING THEM OR GIVING THEM OPTION IS TO TAKE OLDEST CASES FIRST, EXPLAINING WHY NO INTERROGATION EXPERIENCE IN THE COLUMNS ABOVE WAS ORIGINATED LATER THAN LATE 1977. WORTH NOTING TOO IS THAT INTERROGATION EXPERIENCES BEFORE EARLY 1976 WERE GENERALLY BY POLICE -- IT WAS ABOUT THEN THAT THE ARMED FORCES MOVED INTO LARGE SCALE REPRESSION EFFORT. MORE RECENT EXPERIENCES AT CLANDESTINE CENTERS COME

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04

BUENOS 06707 02 OF 04 161745Z

FROM SECONDARY SOURCES. THE RELIABILITY OF THESE SOURCES CAN BE DOUBTED IN INDIVIDUAL CASES, BUT THE HISTORIES GIVEN CONFORM TO A CREDIBLE PATTERN.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL.

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

PAGE 01 BUENOS 06707 03 OF 04 161837Z ACTION SS-25

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 3 OF 4 BUENOS AIRES 6707

EXDIS

THE REPORTS CONCERN: THE NAVAL MECHANICS SCHOOL - THE MOST DETAILED REPORT OF ACTIVITIES THERE CAME FROM HORACIO MAGGIO (.A. A-3, 1978 B.A. 3244). REPEATEDLY EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT ACTIVITIES THERE CEASED A YEAR AGO. CAMPO DE MAYO - AN ENORMOUS ARMY BASE OUTSISE BUENOS AIRES. "PUENTE DOCE" - ON THE ROAD TO EZEIZA, NOW RAZED (A FORMER PRISONER DESCRIBED BEING TAKEN AWAY WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER PRISONERS). THE "LA ARMONIA RANCH" NEAR ARANA, A SHORT DISTANCE FROM LA PLATA, ABANDONED, SOME BUILDINGS DYNAMITED ABOUT JANUARY 1979. "LAS MALVINAS" - A JOCULAR REFERENCE TO AN AIR FORCE WAREHOUSE BETWEEN QUILMES AND AVELLANEDA. LIKE "BANFIELD" IT WAS APPARENTLY USED (IN PART AT LEAST) TO RECEIVED PRISONERS FROM ARANA. A FACILITY NEAR GENERAL PAZ AT RICCHIERI. CONFIDENTIAL

COMPTDENSTAL

PAGE 02 BUENOS 06707 03 OF 04 161837Z

(GENERAL PAZ IS THE CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROAD AROUND THE FEDERAL CAPITAL AND RICCHIERI IS THE ROAD LEADING TO EZEIZA.)

- 10. FRAGMENTARY REPORTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED OF CLANDESTINE CENTERS LOCATED AT LA TABLADA BARRACKS (NEAR BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE'S BORDER WITH THE FEDERAL CAPITAL), A BUILDING IN THE CAPITAL LOCATED AT RIVADAVIA 8000, THE ARMY ARSENAL OF "VIEJO BUENO" NEAR MONTE CHINGOLO, A MILITARY BASE NEAR THE BUENOS AIRES SUBURB OF SAN JUSTO AND IN LA PLATA (A PARTICULARLY SEVERELY HIT CITY, BOTH IN TERMS OF TERROISM AND ITS REPRESSION) THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS: THE FEDERAL POLICE'S "ROBBERRIES INVESTIGATIONS UNIT" AT 55TH STREET NUMBER 12-13, THE MARINE BARRACKS AND THE PEREYRA RAILROAD STATION. POLICE STATIONS IN LA PLATA MAY HAVE BEEN USED FOR INTERRO-GATIONS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, THOUGH THESE CANNOT OF COURSE BE CONSIDERED "CLANDESTINE" EXCEPT IN THE SENSE THAT PRISONERS' IDENTITIES WERE, APPARENTLY, MAINTAINED A SECRET.
 - 12. NO VERIFICATION IS POSSIBLE AT THIS
 TIME OF ANY OF THE INFORMATION GIVEN ABOVE OR THAT
 ANY OF THESE CENTERS STILL MAY EXIST.
 (COMMENT: SWEDISH EMBASSY COOEAGUES HERE TELL
 US FRANKLY THAT THEY HAVE NO INDEPENDENT INFORMATION ABOUT DETENTION CENTERS, CLANDESTINE PRISONERS
 ETC. WE REGRET THAT GOSSIP AND SPECULATION THAT WAS
 TRADED HERE FREELY ALONG THE DIPLOMATIC GRAPEVINE WAS REPORTED IN
 STOCKHOLM -- SEE AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 3279 -AS AN EX CATHEDRA AMEMBASSY ASSESSMENT.)

COMPIDENTIAL

PAGE 03

BUENOS 06707 03 OF 04 1618372

- 13. CHANCES THAT CAMPS EXIST TODAY. THE REMAINS OF CLANDESTINE CENTERS THAT HAVE BEEN RAZED HAVE BEEN VISITED BY HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS. ONCE THE NAVAL MECHANICS SCHOOL WAS DEACTIVATED AS AN INTERROGATION CENTER ITS FORMER PURPOSE WAS FAIRLY OPENLY MENTIONED.
- 14. WE HAVE NO RESOURCES FOR VERIFYING WHETHER ANY OF THE OTHER ACTIVITIES LISTED ABOVE EXIST TODAY, OR OF CERTIFYING THAT NEW ONES MIGHT NOT

HAVE COME INTO BEING. THIS IS TRUE DESPITE THE FACT THAT THIS IS A "TARGET" AREA FOR INFORMATION AND OR RUMORS (REPORTED IN B.A. 3056 AND 6150, FOR EXAMPLE).

15. WE HAVE HOWEVER THE STATEMENTS OF GENERAL VIOLA AND FONMIN PASTOR TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT DETENTION CENTERS DO NOT EXIST (SEE B.A. 2490, 2828 AND 6614) AND AN ASSURANCE TO THIS EFFECT GIVEN TO THE DEFENSE ATTACHE BY ARMY DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL BAYON ON AUGUST 10, AND TO AN EMBOFF BY COL. SAN ROMAN OF THE INTERIOR MINISTRY OF JULY 30. THE SOURCE OF THE REPORTS THAT CLANDESTINE CAMPS HAD NOT BEEN ENTIRELY ELIMINATED AND THE CONJECTURE THAT SOME PRISONERS WERE BEING KILLED (B.A. 6150) WAS AN OFFICIAL OF A GOA SECURITY SERVICE WHO WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO HAVE FULL INFORMATION REGARDING POSSIBLE CENTERS. WE CONSIDER HIS SPECULATION WAS INFORMED, 'THOUGH IT WAS UNSUPPORTED BY ANY CONFIRMING REPORTS. THE RELIAPLITY OF THIS SOURCE IS QUESTIONABLE, SINCE HE HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED TO TALK WITH US BY HIS SUPERIORS, AND IS USED ON OCCASION TO CONVEY INFORMA-TION THE GOA WANTS TO GET BEFORE US. AS A GOVERNMENT AGENT IT SEEMS IMPROBABLE THAT HE WOULD INVENT INFORMATION DETRIMENTAL TO HIS OWN EMPLOYERS, YET HE GAVE CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04

BUENOS 06707 03 OF 04 161837Z

DETRIMENTAL TESTIMONY AND THERE EXISTS THE POSSIBILITY THERE IS TRUTH TO HIS REPORTS.

16. THE REASONING BEHIND THESE ASSERTIONS IS MORE OF INTEREST. OUR CONTACT COMMENTED THAT "THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT CENTERS ARE NO LONGER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01

BUENOS 06707 04 OF 04 161859Z

ACTION SS-25 C

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SSO-00 /026 W

-----048388 161903Z /42

O R 161531Z AUG 79
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1957
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 4 OF 4 BUENOS AIRES 6707

PVDIC

NEEDED. " SHARPLY DIMINISHED PICKUPS, HE LED US TO REASON (PERHAPS 600 IN 1978, AS OPPOSED TO CONSIDERABLY MORE IN THE YEARS PRECEDING) SIMPLY CLOSED THE DETENTION CETERS BY ATTRITION -- FOR THOSE WHO WERE BROUGHT INTO THE SYSTEM OF INTERROGATION EITHER "SAVED THEMSELVES" (QUOTING COL. SAN ROMAN) OR DID NOT. NO ONE TELS US PRECISELY THAT THOSE WHO DID NOT SAVE TEHMSELVES WERE EXECUTED, BUT THE IMPLECATION IS INSECAPABLE AND WOULD NOT BE DENIED UNDER THE INFORMAL. EVEN FRIENDLY CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH OUR CONVERSATIONS TAKE PLACE: (IT WAS GENERAL VIOLA HIMSELF WHO USED THE PHRASE "THE FOREVER ABSENT" -- LOS AUSENTES PARA SIEMPRE" IN HIS MAY 29 ARMY DAY SPEECH, A TERM WE ASSUME WAS WELL CALCULATED TO DESCRIBE THE DISAPPEARED.)

17. WHAT, THEN IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT PRISONERS TAKEN INTO THE SYSTEM DURING 1978 MAY STILL BE ALIVE? HOW LONG CAN THE INTERROGATION PROCESS LAST? HERE THERE IS NO ANSWER GIVEN, NO HINT CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02

BUENOS 06707 04 OF 04 161859Z

EVEN. "HOW LONG IS A PIECE OF STRING?" THE CLEAREST DISCERNIBLE ANSWER IS "UNTIL A PERSON'S INTELLIGENCE USEFULNESS IS AT AN END, WHICH MAY INCLUDE A PERIOD OF A PERSON'S BARGAINING FOR HIS LIFE. IF A PERSON HAS NOT BEEN KILLED AND HAS BEEN COOPERATIVE HE MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE HIMSELF THROUGH BARGAINING -- VIA PEN, EXFILTRATION FROM

CONFIDENTIAL

ARGENTINA, OUTRIGHT RELEASE. THIS SOURCE OPINED THAT SO LONG AS THE SECURITY FORCES HAD PRISONERS WHICH THEY WISHED TO QUESTION THERE WOULD BE CLANDESTINE FACILITIES FOR DOING SO. HE SUSPECTED THAT THE ARMY HAD SOME AND SSUMED THAT THE OTHER SERVICES DID AS WELL. IF SOME PRISONERS ENTERING SUCH INTERROGATION CENTERS IN THE PAST HAD NEVER EMRGED ALIVE, HE ASSUMED THE SAME WOULD HAPPEN NOW. BASED ON OUR QUESTIONING OF HIM, THIS SOURCE'S VIEWS ARE BASED ON THE LOGIC THAT SINCE THE SYSTEM OPERATED IN A WAY TO ELIMINATE SOME PRISONERS IN THE PAST, IT IS PROBABLY STILL DOING SO, THOUGH ON A SCALE REFLECTING THE FAR SMALLER INTAKE. WE HAVE NOR RELIABLE REPORTS OR INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THE STATEMENTS OF THIS ONE SOURCE.

18. CONCLUSIONS. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT
THE LIKELIHOOD OF THERE BEING SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS
OF CLANDESTINE PRISONERS IS SMALL. IF THERE ARE
SUCH PRISONERS THEY PROBABLY NUMBER IN THE FEW
HUNDREDS AT THE MOST. OTHERS TAKEN INTO THE SYSTEM
OF INTERROGATION ARE DEAD OR RELEASED OR UNDER PEN.
WE CONTINUE TO FAIL TO IMAGINE WHY THE GOA WOULD
KEEP SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF PRISONERS BEYOND SOME
KIND OF PERCEIVED INTELLIGENCE USEFULNESS, A
USEFULNESS WHICH IS QUICKLY DEMONSTRATED OR NOT.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03

BUENOS 06707 04 OF 04 161859Z

THE SYSTEM OF "PROCESSING" PRISONERS HAS PROBABLY NOT BEEN ALTERED, EVEN CONSIDERING THE IMMINENCE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION'S VISIT. WHAT WAS ALTERED DRAMATICALLY, MOST RECENTLY BY NEW ORDERS GIVEN IN NOVEMBER OF LAST YEAR, WERE THE CRITERIA FOR ENTERING THE SYSTEM -- WITH THE EFFECT OF PRACTICALLY CUTTING OUT NEW ENTRANTS TO THE SYSTEM BEGINNING ABOUT JANUARY OF 1979. THE 1978 NUMBER SHOWED A SIGNIFICANT DECREASE FROM 1977.

19. RECOMMENDATION: ON THE BASIS OF THE SPECULATION THAT SOME UNACKNOWLEDGED PRISONERS STILL REMAIN IN THE SYSTEM, THERE IS A STRONG URGE TO MAKE REPRESENTATION TO THE GOA FOR THEIR WELFARE. THIS WAS WHAT PROMPTED THE AMBASSADOR'S RAISING THE TOPIC WITH GENERAL VIOLA AND THE FOREIGN. MINISTER, AND THE QUESTIONS OF ARMY AND INTERIOR

MINISTRY OFFICIALS AND OUR SECURITY SERVICE SOURCE. WE HAVE NO DOUBTS THAT THE GOA IS AWARE OF OUR CONCERN FOR ANY SUCH PRISONERS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXPRESS THIS CONCERN. IN PART BECAUSE OF THAT, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY FORCEFUL. THAT KIND OF REPRESENTATION WOULD, AT THIS POINT, PROBABLY ELICIT FROM GENERAL VIOLA THE REACTION THAT HE HAS ORDERED THAT PRISONERS BE DELIVERED TO JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES, AND HE WOULD TAKE ACTION ON ANY CASE IN WHICH WE COULD GIVE HIM SPECIFIC INFORMATION. OUR INFORMATION IS NOT ADEQUATE TO RESPOND TO SUCH A REQUEST. IT SEEMS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT THIS IS THE REASON THAT THE NUNCIO IS UNPREPARED TO MAKE A DEMARCHE ON THIS SUBJECT. (STOCKHOLM 3279) IN THIS SITUATION IT SEEMS BEST TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AN EFFECTIVE VISIT OF THE IAHRC. CASTRO

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

1 of 12

Pocumen (monmation)	
DOC_NBR	1979BUENOS06707
FILM	D790372-0975